What is claimed is:

1. A method of assessing the likelihood that a patient is suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus which comprises:

a) obtaining a fluid sample from the subject;

b) contacting the sample with an agent which forms a complex with an autoantibody to a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21 or 23, under conditions permitting any such autoantibody present in the sample to complex with the agent; and

c) detecting the presence of any autoantibody-agent complex formed in step (b);

wherein the detection of autoantibody-agent complex in step (c) indicates that the patient is likely suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the fluid sample comprises sera, plasma, urine, saliva, synovial fluid, cerebro-spinal fluid, or lymph.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the agent is an antibody or fragment thereof which binds to the

autoantibody and is labeled with a detectable marker.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21, SEQ ID NO:22, SEQ ID NO:23, SEQ ID NO:24, or an immunogenic fragment thereof.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the protein or the immunogenic fragment thereof is labeled with a detectable marker.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the detectable marker is a radioisotope, a chromophore, a biomolecule, a fluorophore, a radiolabeled molecule, a dye, an affinity label, an antibody, biotin, streptavidin, a metabolite, a mass tag, or a dextran.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting in step (c) comprises contacting the autoantibody-agent complex with a second antibody which binds to the autoantibody-agent complex and is labeled with a detectable marker.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining the amount of complex formed in step

(b) and comparing such amount with a standard, wherein a greater amount of complex formed in step (b) than in the standard indicates that the subject is likely suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus.

9. The method of claim 9, wherein the standard is a fluid sample comprising sera, plasma, urine, saliva, synovial fluid, cerebro-spinal fluid, or lymph from a patient not suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus.

10. A method of assessing the likelihood that a patient is suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus which comprises:

a) providing a solid support to which an agent which forms a complex with an autoantibody to a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21 or 23, under conditions permitting any such autoantibody present in the sample to complex with the agent is bound;

b) contacting the solid support from (a) with a fluid sample from the subject;

c) removing any of the autoantibody which is not bound to the solid support; and

d) detecting the presence of autoantibody bound to the solid support,

wherein the detection of autoantibody bound to the solid support in step (d) indicates that the patient is likely suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the agent is a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21, SEQ ID NO:22, SEQ ID NO:23, SEQ ID NO:24, or an immunogenic fragment thereof and wherein the detecting of the presence of autoantibody bound to the solid support with an antibody which binds to the autoantibody is labeled with a detectable marker.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the fluid sample comprises sera, plasma, urine, saliva, synovial fluid, cerebro-spinal fluid, or lymph.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the detectable marker is a radioisotope, a chromophore, a biomolecule, a fluorophore, a radiolabeled molecule, a dye, an affinity label, an antibody, biotin, streptavidin, a metabolite, a mass tag, or a dextran.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising determining the amount of complex formed in step (b) and comparing such amount with a standard,

wherein a greater amount of complex formed in step (b) than in the standard indicates that the subject is likely suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the standard is a fluid sample comprising sera, plasma, urine, saliva, synovial fluid, cerebro-spinal fluid, or lymph from a patient not suffering from neuropsychiatric systemic lupus erythematosus.

16. A diagnostic kit which comprises a container comprising an agent which forms a complex with an autoantibody to a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21 or 23, which agent is labeled with a detectable marker.

17. The kit of claim 16, wherein the agent comprises a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21, SEQ ID NO:22, SEQ ID NO:23, SEQ ID NO:24, or an immunogenic fragment thereof.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the agent is an antibody or fragment thereof which binds to the autoantibody and is labeled with a detectable marker.

19. A diagnostic kit which comprises a container comprising a solid support to which an agent which forms a complex with an autoantibody to a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21 or 23 is bound, which agent is labeled with a detectable marker.

20. The kit of claim 19, wherein the agent comprises a protein comprising consecutive amino acids having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:21, SEQ ID NO:22, SEQ ID NO:23, SEQ ID NO:24, or an immunogenic fragment thereof.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the agent is an antibody or fragment thereof which binds to the autoantibody and is labeled with a detectable marker.